

The American Observer

A free, virtuous, and enlightened people must know well the great principles and causes on which their happiness depends. -- James Monroe

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U. S. Faces Serious Shipping Shortage

Losses to Submarines Intensify Problem of Sending Supplies to Many Fronts

SHIPPING BOARD REVAMPED

Reorganization Is Designed to Speed Building and Provide More Efficient Use of Vessels

Only a few short months ago the American people were greatly worried about the bottlenecks of production. Factories were slow to convert from making civilian goods to making the instruments of war. Strikes delayed production in some cases. There were shortages of critical materials which slowed and sometimes halted parts of the defense program.

Today the factories of war are almost all built; many of them are in full swing by this time. Planes, tanks, and guns are being produced at a rate believed to be impossible a few months ago. But a new and serious bottleneck has developed. "Lack of Ships Now Major Problem." "Ship Situation to Fore as Major War Problem." "Sinkings of Allied Ships Create Crisis Despite Big Output of American Yards." These are typical of the headlines which all tell the same story: "The No. 1 bottleneck now is lack of ships!"

Reorganization

The seriousness of the shipping situation was clearly reflected a few days ago in an important shakeup of the War Shipping Board (WSB). In order to give more time to Rear Admiral Emory S. Land, chairman of the Maritime Commission and head of the War Shipping Board, and to his chief assistant, Rear Admiral Howard L. Vickery, for greater concentration on the shipbuilding program, a Deputy Administrator was appointed to the WSB in the person of Lewis Douglas. His duties will be to determine what materials are most urgently needed at the various fighting fronts, which ships should carry these goods, what goods they should bring back, and what routes they should take each way. Admiral Land has been under considerable fire in recent weeks because of alleged inefficiencies in the handling of the United States merchant marine; the new reorganization should go far to answer these criticisms and to enable us to get the maximum use from our available ships.

At first glance this serious shipping problem seems to be a paradox. Just a few days ago the nation observed National Maritime Day. At many points all over the country celebrations were held; 27 ships totaling 270,000 deadweight tons were launched during the 24-hour period. It was the biggest mass launching since 1918. The President, Ad-

(Continued on page 6)



Launching a tanker

Our Stake in Russia

(Reprinted from the New York Times)

As the Battle of Russia develops into the tremendous conflict that fate has set for the critical summer of 1942, it must be increasingly clear to every American that our own fortunes are deeply involved in this test of strength. The Red armies are not fighting in defense of a democracy. But they are fighting nonetheless—fighting with magnificent spirit and great skill—in defense of the only kind of world in which democracy can live. By every means at our disposal we ought to help them. Every American plane and tank and gun that can be sent into this battle will be fighting for our own safety.

That this will be by far the greatest battle fought since the war began seems certain beyond all doubt. At the same time we shall trap ourselves in a psychology favorable to Hitler if we let ourselves begin to think of this forthcoming battle as "the decisive battle of the war." Decisive in one sense it can surely be. If the Russians should actually succeed in destroying Hitler's armies, the war in Europe would be over. Even if the Russians should succeed only in keeping their own armies intact, and forcing Hitler to fight through another Russian winter, they would in all probability have dealt the "decisive" blow. But "decisive" this battle cannot be in the sense that a Hitler victory would end the war—even if it were a victory so complete that it routed and destroyed the Russian armies.

For, even with the Russian armies routed and destroyed, Hitler would have to keep on fighting. His position actually would be less favorable, from the point of view of an ultimate German victory, than it was in the summer of 1940, after the fall of France. Then Britain stood alone. There were no Russian armies in the field. There was no United States at Britain's side. Without an ally in the world, without adequate arms even for the defense of their own island, the British people faced a German army which seemed then to be invincible. Today, even if this German army should succeed in overrunning Russia, the situation would be more favorable than in the dark days of 1940.

There ought to be no place in our convictions for such defeatist theories as the idea, now frequently expressed, that "the Battle of Russia will decide everything," or that "the next few weeks or months will decide whether Hitler rules the world." The Battle of Russia will not decide everything, and Hitler will not rule the world. The Battle of Russia is an engagement of tremendous importance to our people. Into it we ought to throw everything that we can give. It is a battle that holds the possibility of complete or near complete defeat for Hitler. But it is not a battle that holds the possibility of ultimate defeat for the United Nations. Regardless of its outcome, we shall still have weapons with which to fight, and the will to use them as long as a single Hitler soldier stands with a rifle in his hands.

Crucial Battles Are Waged on East Front

Soviets Still Struggle Desperately to Wrest Control of Kharkov from Nazis

CAUCASUS ATTACK LOOMS

Hitler Seeks Oil and Other Riches of Region for War Machine and to Feed His Own People

As we go to press, the world is still awaiting decisive developments on the Eastern Front. After nearly a month of intense fighting, neither the Germans nor the Russians have won victories comparable to those won in earlier campaigns of the war. It is true that the Nazis have driven the Soviet forces from the Kerch Peninsula, but their gains there have by no means been decisive nor on a scale equal to a major offensive.

Farther to the north, in the Kharkov area, the tide of battle has swayed back and forth. Apparently the Russians have made considerable gains. They have indeed been able to throw back the German counter-offensives that have been launched. But they have been unable to retake the city of Kharkov. Under the leadership of Marshal Semyon Timoshenko, the Red army has struck heavy blows at the Nazis, but the campaign has not yet taken a decisive turn one way or another.

Drive and Counterdrive

In order to relieve the terrific pressure which Timoshenko's forces have brought to bear upon Kharkov, the Nazis have struck to the south of Kharkov. Last week, it was reported that some of the fiercest fighting of the war was taking place south of Kharkov. If successful, this German drive will force the Russians to withdraw troops and equipment from Kharkov; in which case they will have suffered a severe defeat in that purpose.

Whether the present military campaigns on the Eastern Front constitute a prelude to the major summer offensive which has been feared for many months it is difficult to determine. But the immediate objectives of the two belligerents are fairly clear. The Nazis began the fighting in the area of Kerch, which is part of the Crimean Peninsula. Their purpose was to gain control of that area and thus be in a position to launch a major offensive against the Caucasus, which lies just across the narrow Straits of Kerch.

It was to prevent the German drive in the south from gaining momentum that the Soviet armies struck out against Kharkov. Not only did the Russians hope to force the Germans to withdraw troops from the south, but they wanted to recapture Kharkov for other reasons. The city of Kharkov plays a tremendously important role in Germany's entire Russian campaign. It is a great railroad center and the Germans depend

(Concluded on page 7)



After the blitz hit Coventry, England

Background of War

MOST people are so engrossed in the day-by-day developments of the Second World War that they neglect to delve into its background and causes. And yet an appreciation of the deep-seated causes of the conflict is essential if a lasting peace is to be written at the end of the war. It is for this reason that Francis L. Bacon's *The War and America* (New York: The Macmillan Company. 60 cents) should be widely read.

Mr. Bacon's work is direct and to the point. It is short, only 125 pages, and yet it gives the essential issues arising from the last war and states the main developments leading to the present conflict. But it is more than a factual presentation of the background. The author shows the relationship of isolated events throughout the world and fits them into the general picture.

Mr. Bacon not only brings into clear focus the errors of the last peace settlement, but indicates how our national psychology became such as to make possible the rise of dictatorship and the coming of the Second World War. For its part, the United States withdrew into the false concept of isolation and wanted nothing but to return to "normalcy." Pacifism became a cult. "As never before," Mr. Bacon points out, "schools taught not the glories of war but rather its horrors and needlessness." And while the national psychology was pacifist-dominated, nothing was done to adopt those policies which would have made lasting peace possible. In other words, we, together with the British and the

French, were unrealistic in our approach to the great international problems of the post-First-World-War era.

Here we find a brief outline of the outstanding developments of the postwar period—the rise of Mussolini and later Hitler, the Spanish civil war as a testing ground for the new methods of war—really a prelude to the present struggle, the failure of appeasement, and finally the blitzkrieg in Poland, Norway, and Western Europe.

The War and America carries us through the early part of this year. It outlines the tremendous problems of strategy which must be solved by the United States and the United Nations. Thus, it brings into clear focus many of the moves which are likely to be attempted on the military front before the present struggle has ended.

While Mr. Bacon subscribes to no definite formula for restoring and preserving peace once the war is over, he does urge everyone to give thoughtful consideration to that problem, which he calls the number one problem facing the world today. "While the immediate task is to win the war, it is essential that there be constant consideration and as much planning as possible for the peace which must follow victory. . . . The capacity of mankind to reason intelligently and the wisest leadership of the most capable men will never have been put to so great a test as in the effort to fashion a peace which will improve the relationships of the world's peoples and establish a means of preventing war."

Mr. Bacon's book strikes a proper balance in dealing with the military, economic, and diplomatic aspects of the Second World War. Here again the interrelationship is properly shown. For example, problems such as unemployment, world trade, and others in the economic realm are shown to have a direct bearing upon the diplomatic maneuvers which preceded the outbreak of war. And Mr. Bacon strongly emphasizes the necessity of seeking solutions to these problems if peace is to be built on a sound and permanent foundation. Those citizens who would follow intelligently the day-by-day developments of the war would do well to read carefully *The War and America* for the necessary background material.

News from All Fronts

Brigadier General James H. Doolittle, a few days ago, received the praise of the nation and a Congressional Medal of Honor for leading the Army bombers which carried the first blows of the war to Japanese soil. His 79 companions on the mass flight, which dropped destruction on Japan's four largest cities, received Distinguished Service Crosses.

Among the materials which the United States obtained from abroad before the war is mercury. To replace the raw mercury which Spain, Italy, and Austria furnished us, we now extract the silvery liquid metal from cinnabar, an ore mined in California, Nevada, and Oregon.

The Army has designed a 17-ounce stove, which is lit by its own sparking device, for the use of mountain and ski troops. The stove is so simple that it can be operated by a soldier wearing heavy gloves. Built to take heavy punishment, it can support the weight of a 200-pound man.

American young people have been signing pledges in recent days to buy as many war savings stamps during the summer as they possibly can.



They are not promising to purchase specific amounts, but by pledging to do their best they make it certain that the campaign will succeed.

Everyone is thus given an equal opportunity to have a share in this important part of the nation's war program.

Twenty million passenger cars, according to the Office for Emergency Management, will go off the roads within 12 to 15 months unless there is effective sharing of rides through carpooling on a nation-wide scale. If the worst happens, there will be only 8,000,000 cars still in condition to keep rolling in 1943.

Farmers can get a good idea of the importance of their efforts to the war program from this statement made recently by a Department of Agriculture official: "An average cargo ship carries to American expeditionary forces or their Allies production from 3,800 average farms in dried eggs, dried or evaporated milk, cheese, canned or cured pork, lard, flour, and canned vegetables." Or—

every time a 35,000-ton battleship is produced it takes food from 42,000 acres of land to feed its builders.

Work is getting under way on the salvage of the U. S. S. *Lafayette*, formerly the French liner *Normandie*, which has remained heeled over on her side in New York harbor ever since being swept by fire several months ago. An expert board of inquiry decided that it will be worthwhile to spend a year's time and several million dollars in putting the vessel back into shape.

June 30 is the date on which young men between the ages of 18 and 19 and those who reached their 20th birthday since December 31, 1941, must register under the selective service system. The younger group is not subject to military service.

Aerial bombing smashed the flowing river of lava which recently threatened destruction to the city of Hilo on the island of Hawaii. After the fires of the great volcano, Mauna Loa, had died down so that they would no longer guide enemy planes, the Army permitted it to be known that the 13,680-foot peak had never spouted more viciously since 1881.

Gasoline and oil shortages, caused by difficulties of water-borne transportation to the East coast, are calling attention to the comparative capacities of ocean tankers and railroad tank cars. It requires four trains of 70 tank cars each to carry as much oil as one average-sized ocean tanker hauls.

Men were given something to think about a few days ago, when War Manpower Chief Paul McNutt said that women can handle four-fifths of all jobs in vital war industries—even in tank factories, oil refineries, and shipyards. A survey of 1,859 war industry jobs, McNutt continued, showed that women can either do or learn to do almost any kind of work.

Remaking our cities is one of the great tasks which the nation may undertake after the war. The National Resources Planning Board has just published a pamphlet, called "Better Cities," which sets forth the goals that should guide such planning and improvement efforts. Copies of the pamphlet may be obtained, at five cents each, from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.

The American Observer

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JEEP AMBULANCES. This new type of ambulance is extremely useful in passing through narrow alleys. It can even be used in hospital corridors.

Education for the Coming Air Age

THE world has entered upon an "air age." We are at the beginning of a period in history which may be as revolutionary in its effects upon man as were the stone age, the bronze age, or the machine age. It will change our ideas and our ways of living. Already it has brought profound changes to war; we can scarcely imagine the meaning it holds for the future days of peace.

In order that we may adjust ourselves to the air age, we must make immediate changes in our methods of education. We need to study aerography—the science of air—as well as geography, the science of earth. We need new maps to give us a new vision of the world, and new textbooks to go with them. We must think differently about distances, oceans, continents, and climates. We must study the far-reaching social, economic, and educational implications of aviation.

The Coming Air Age

These facts are made clear in a report which has been issued by the Civil Aeronautics Administration, through its Aviation Education Research Project. The contents of this report should have the attention of all teachers and students. It is entitled *Education for the Air Age* and may be obtained by teachers and school administrators by writing to the Aviation Education Research Project, 525 West 120th Street, New York City.

The Civil Aeronautics Administration, in cooperation with the United States Office of Education, is working at full speed on a program to "air-condition" America. By the time schools open in the fall, its program will be in full swing. A number of teachers in schools and colleges have been "drafted" to make advance studies and to prepare materials. It is expected that by July 1 a series of handbooks, manuals, and texts will have been developed for use in classes next fall. A special group of 11 public, private, and parochial schools in the New York area has been serving as a laboratory for the testing of materials.

Through this program, the schools of America will be prepared next fall to study the meaning of the air age. American youth will begin to catch up with German youth who, since 1935, have had aviation studies from kindergarten through secondary school. We are years behind Germany in this field of study and preparation and we must hurry to catch up with her and surpass her.

The basic facts upon which the program is based are easily understood—indeed, many of them by now are well known. The development of the airplane means that we are beginning to live in a third dimension—the air—as distinguished from the land and sea. We have to think of man as a being who lives at the bottom of an "ocean of air" of great depth. It is an ocean through which all the points on the earth's surface can be reached easily and with amazing speed.

During the last 20 years, man has been learning to travel and communicate through this third dimension. He has been learning, as the CAA report states, that "the shortest distance between two points on the earth's surface is a curved line, known as a great circle. Airplanes can fly great

circle courses, since they are not handicapped by surface barriers such as oceans and mountains."

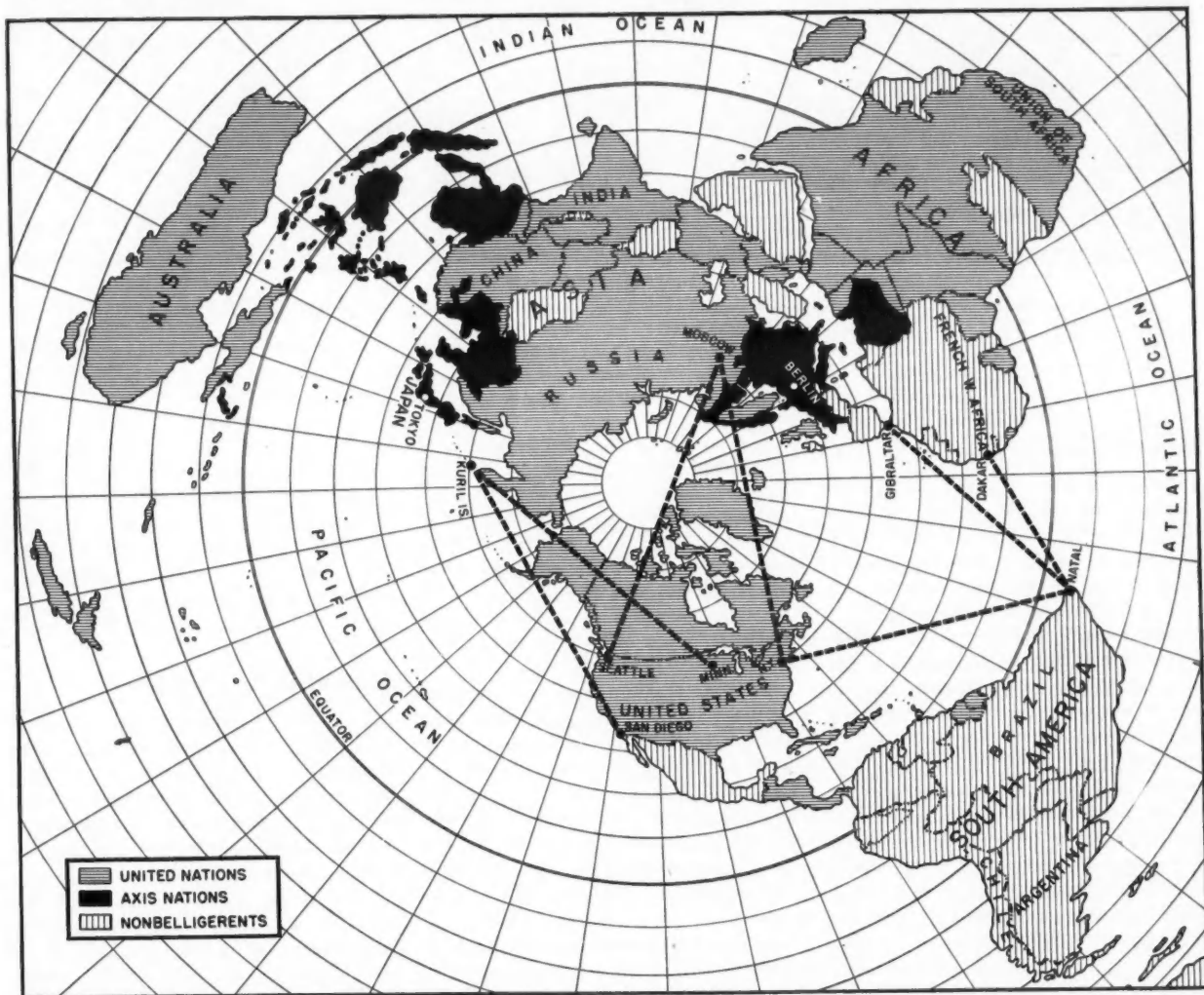
These are the primary facts underlying the revolution which is being ushered in by the air age. They are facts which oblige us to revise many of the ideas we have had in the past. Here are a few examples of how concepts are being altered:

is 300 miles nearer to Tokyo than is San Diego. Madison, Wisconsin, is nearer the most distant capital of Europe than to any of the large South American cities.

About maps. We cannot visualize the new directions unless we look at a globe map of the world, or a map based upon the globe. Such a map appears on this page. It is a polar

the stratosphere and it matters not what conditions prevail below. And significant is the fact that the stratosphere lies only four or five miles above the North Pole, while it is nine or 10 miles above the equator. This is another advantage of the short cuts across the Atlantic.

These are only a few of the ways in which our ideas are being made



This map shows the closest air distances between various strategic points. It gives a good picture of the northern regions, but southern lands are stretched out of shape.

About distance. It took George Washington five days to travel from Boston to Philadelphia. Today, modern planes can cross the Atlantic Ocean in a little more than five hours (six hours and 40 minutes is the actual record). Modern airliners, traveling at a speed of 300 miles an hour, can go from New York to Cape Town, Africa, in 26 hours, whereas by sea it takes 25 days. Singapore is only 2½ hours from San Francisco.

We have to think in terms of time rather than in terms of distance. The size of the earth has not changed and it is still 3,000 miles across the Atlantic. Our idea of 3,000 miles as a great distance, however, needs to be replaced by the more realistic idea that the 3,000 miles can be traveled in only a few hours' time.

About direction. The plane, not being obstructed by ocean and land masses, naturally takes the straightest course to reach any given point. In order to reach Japan it would not fly westward over the Pacific but would go north and pass over the western extremity of Alaska. To reach Moscow, it would fly not eastward across the Atlantic and Europe, but again north.

Among the other facts which aerography teaches are these: If the Japanese were to fly by the most direct route from Tokyo to Panama, they would pass over Denver. Minneapolis

map of the world, and shows the Arctic Sea as a sort of "Mediterranean" or middle sea surrounded by North America, Asia, and Europe. The shortest air routes lie over or around this Arctic Sea.

South America, in many parts, is closer to Europe and closer to Africa than to the United States. This is a fact which affects our ideas about the Western Hemisphere. In the air age we must think in global terms—in terms of a round world—and can no longer look upon the world as being neatly divided into hemispheres well separated by large oceans. The old flat maps which hide the importance of the polar regions, and which give a distorted picture of a round world, will no longer be sufficient.

Stratosphere Flying

About weather. The airplane is fast becoming able to travel in disregard of weather. The bottom of our ocean of air is a region of wind and storm which frequently offer serious obstacles to air travel. But when we go above 20,000 feet we get above the weather. We travel in the sub-stratosphere, and higher still in the stratosphere, a strange, silent region without dust, clouds, or storms. One day is exactly like the next, with a white, blinding sun blazing from a sky of purplish black or gray. There is good flying weather every day in

to change by the air age. The purpose of the program being developed by the Civil Aeronautics Administration is to educate the nation to the meaning of these new facts.

Next fall, social science classes will begin studying about the influence of the airplane upon national and international life. They will see, for example, how the plane implies a gradual shifting of population away from densely settled areas, bringing about a more even distribution of the land. They will study the vast new aviation industry which is arising, and will consider the effects of air traffic upon other industries.

Perhaps most important at this time, they will study the meaning of the airplane in terms of world peace. Classes in international relations will see that frontiers, buffer states, Maginot Lines, and oceans are reduced in importance, and in some cases made meaningless, by the airplane.

Classes in biology and general science will study flying organisms, types of flight, and the effects of flying on the human body. Classes in physics will be concerned with the dependence of aviation upon physical laws and will study the principles of flight. Geography classes will study the new world maps for the air age, and will consider the nature of the atmosphere. Mathematics classes will draw problems from aviation.

The Week at Home



In Congress

Congress ends an unofficial 10-day "recess" day after tomorrow, on June 3. During this time, by agreement between Republican and Democratic leaders, no major controversial issues have been debated in either house. This is the first of a number of "let-ups" which Congress plans to arrange from time to time during the summer in order that senators and representatives may be free to campaign in the state primaries which lead up to the general election on November 5.

News from Congress, however, is as plentiful as ever, with reports on new tax measures commanding most of the attention. The House Ways and Means Committee is gradually shaping up the bill which will be launched on the usual journey through Congress. Because so many changes will be made in it along the way, no one can tell exactly what new taxes may be in store. It is simply accepted that taxes on incomes will be increased sharply, and that many thousands of persons who have previously enjoyed enough exemptions to keep from paying will be placed within reach of federal tax collectors.

As we go to press, it has not been decided whether Congress will adopt

a proposal to send 10 members to Britain this summer for conferences with representative members of Parliament. The group would include both senators and representatives, and would be bipartisan—five Republicans and five Democrats.

Rubber and Gas

Gasoline rationing, now confined to the eastern seaboard, is almost certain to become nationwide before many weeks go by, perhaps by July 1. The primary purpose will be to divide up the transportation facilities for gas and fuel oil, with the rest of the country sharing some of the burden now borne by the eastern states.

A more far-reaching reason for putting gas rationing on a national basis is to cut down on driving and thus to save tires now on cars. Every day the ordinary use of cars wears off 250,000 pounds of rubber. Should the military needs for rubber outstrip supplies on hand, the government might have to take tires off cars. It therefore wants every possible thing done to conserve the estimated 1,180,000 tons of rubber contained in cars now on the road.

Here is the government's problem: In 1942 alone, it must find 874,000 tons of rubber—409,000 for our

military forces, 200,000 for essential trucks and buses, and 265,000 for the needs of our military allies. To meet these needs, there are only 459,000 tons of new crude and synthetic rubber. The rest must be made up from the stock pile of crude rubber accumulated before war broke out.

New Glider Factory

Gliners for Uncle Sam will soon be rolling in quantity from a new plant opened last week in Kansas. The factory is "all set" to begin work on the huge motorless ships for which the government has let contracts of many millions of dollars.

The construction program will encounter little difficulty from priorities, plywood being the principal material used in glider manufacture. Because of the relative cheapness of this material, compared with aluminum and other metals ordinarily used in aircraft production, the government apparently plans for a great many gliders.

What the gliders are to be used for is, of course, a military secret. But it is no secret that gliders have been studied carefully by military experts everywhere since the Nazis proved motorless planes to be an effective offensive weapon. In their successful campaign against Crete in May 1941, the Germans used strings of gliders towed by large planes to invade the island. With these ships they planted soldiers on rough ground where regular troop transports could not possibly land without "cracking up."

Prison Industries

State prison industries are preparing to take their place in the war program. The way was opened for them when Attorney General Francis Biddle, a few days ago, stated that, in his opinion, the laws which keep most prison-made goods out of the regular channels of trade would not bar such products from being used in the war effort.

How the state prisons can help was immediately outlined by James Bennett, director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Of the 160,000 convicts held in state institutions, he said, 100,000 could be engaged in producing \$100,000,000 worth of materials

for the war. As it is now, many of the prison industries are closed down for the lack of materials. But if engaged in vital production, they could obtain the necessary supplies to make great quantities of metal and textile products, shoes, and other items.

The 39 prison plants for making automobile license plates, for example, could produce cartridge clips, bomb parts, mess kits, and other metal containers. Prison mills could also turn out annually 30,000,000 square yards of cotton textiles, 4,500,000 yards of woollens, 1,400,000 dozen cotton and woolen garments, 250,000 pairs of shoes, 5,000,000 pounds of soap, 200,000 gallons of paint, 50,000,000 pounds of twine and rope, and quantities of wood and leather products. In addition, prison farms could furnish 1,000,000 cases of canned goods a year.

Far Eastern General

Lieutenant General Joseph W. Stilwell left no doubt last week that the United Nations have placed Burma



U. S. ARMY SIGNAL CORPS
Lt. Gen. Joseph Stilwell

high on the list of regions to be recaptured from the Japanese. The general, who is both chief of staff to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek and commander-in-chief of American forces in Burma, India, and China, was speaking from New Delhi, India. He had reached there after a 20-day march through 140 miles of Burmese jungles, and he undertook immediately to tell how Burma had been lost.

It was, he said, the old story of coming up against an enemy with great superiority in both numbers of men and quantities of equipment. There was not even an anti-aircraft gun to point at the 40 to 50 Japanese planes which came over daily. The general described the Japanese soldiers as "tough" but not "supermen."

General Stilwell has spent 15 of his 38 years with the U. S. Army in China, Thailand, and other parts of the Orient. He not only is an expert on Chinese military affairs, but he reads, writes, and speaks several dialects of the difficult Chinese language.

After first-hand experience in many battles, Stilwell says of the Chinese soldier: "Give him arms, equipment, and supplies, and no one on earth can lick him." The Chinese think highly of him, too, and he is the first foreign commander under whom Chinese troops have ever served.



FIRST HIGH SCHOOL NAVY FLYING UNIT. This unit, from New York, has adopted the name "Flying Yankee Doodle Dandies," and began training last week at the flight school at the University of North Carolina.

The Week Abroad

The Far East

An urgent appeal for help last week emphasized the danger by which China is now confronted. Bombers and pursuit planes is what the Chinese want to stem the Japanese tide. Officials in Chungking stated that they feared the Japanese were preparing to launch a major offensive against them which might have serious repercussions upon the cause of the United Nations.



LOOK
JAPANESE AGGRESSION, during the last five years, has walled in China and cut off its supply routes from the outside.

While the pattern of the new Japanese drive against China was not entirely clear, it seemed that it was coming from several directions at the same time. In the south, Japanese troops and equipment were being gathered in Burma, Thailand, and Indo-China in increasing numbers in order to attack Free China from the south.

Another push seemed imminent from the central section, from along the coast, where supplies have been seeping through the Japanese blockade and where airdromes not in Japanese hands have been used by the Chinese. In the interior, new assaults were being made upon Chungking forces. All in all, it seemed that the Chinese would be in for a difficult time if substantial help were not provided by the other United Nations.

Economic War

Britain and the United States are carrying the brunt of the economic warfare which is being waged as intensively as the military war. From reports of the unspectacular, though vital, economic battles against the Axis, it appeared last week that the United Nations are making the most of their opportunities.

Economic warfare, for example, calls for the United Nations to buy up \$500,000 worth of sheepskin gloves which might otherwise be purchased by Germany. As a result, some months later many German soldiers will lack protection for their hands against the cold in Russia. Hides, dried fruits, cotton, and tungsten are just a few of the other things purchased in order to keep them away from the German war machine.

Prices paid are no consideration, nor do the United Nations consider whether they need the items purchased. If the sellers would rather barter, the United States and Britain are prepared to deal on those terms. In other times, the Axis has shown skill in making barter arrangements,

but it can no longer guarantee delivery of the goods which it offers. Germany, moreover, is lacking in surpluses with which to barter.

Despite their own shortages, the United Nations have the cash to buy goods for barter from Latin America. The entire Western Hemisphere also has plenty of food with which to make enticing offers to such nations as Portugal, Turkey, and Spain. Although there are difficulties created by submarine warfare, the United Nations also manage to make good on their delivery promises.

Mexico Acts

By the time this issue of THE AMERICAN OBSERVER reaches its readers, the government of Mexico will undoubtedly have declared war upon the Axis powers. Following the sinking of two Mexican ships, President Avila Camacho summoned his cabinet and a special session of the Mexican Congress was called to consider a war declaration.

Ever since the United States became involved in war, Mexico has cooperated greatly with the United Nations. Within a week after Pearl Harbor, she severed diplomatic relations with the Axis and since then has given the United States considerable support. Her harbors and airports have been opened to the other American nations.

Mexico is the eighth American nation to declare war upon the Axis. Of the remaining 10, eight have severed diplomatic relations. Only Chile and Argentina maintain normal diplomatic relations with Germany, Italy, and Japan.

Bare Cupboards

Germany's failure to conceal the bleak prospects for food production in Europe indicates how desperate the situation may be. Various telltale Nazi admissions to this effect are scarcely a trick to make the United

Nations overconfident, because last week the United States Department of Agriculture reported exactly why Europe's food store is low and her crop outlook poor.

The continent, the department stated, has suffered the worst winter in memory—this on top of the two preceding winters, which were bad enough. This spring has only brought further chill and a drought. A combination of heavy snows, freezing conditions which have locked the soil to depths of two and three feet, and later thaws of flood proportions has dealt heavy blows to agriculture.

One or all of these handicaps have affected farming in every country—in Denmark, Germany, and the Balkans, in Belgium, the Netherlands, and parts of Italy. The Department of Agriculture, with official sources of information on which to depend, paints a picture which indicates that, as a whole, Europe may be facing one of the worst famines in its entire history.

New Caledonia

New Caledonia is rapidly becoming one of the strongest links in the ring of United Nations' outposts surrounding Australia. The important French island lies about 1,000 miles to the east of Australia, and is in the hands of Free French forces and the United States Army. Through their cooperation, it was reported last week, New Caledonia has already been put in a state of readiness that will make it a tough nut for the Japanese to crack.

Much of the speed in strengthening the island has been made possible through the help of the Melanesian natives, who have worked wholeheartedly. They know the 250-mile length of New Caledonia by heart. In addition to laboring on military projects, they are prepared to defend the island with guerrilla warfare. An example of their exceptionally acute senses, which will be invaluable for guerrilla tactics, is the fact that with unaided eyes they can spot objects at sea from a greater distance than Americans can with powerful field glasses.

New Caledonia is expected to be not only an important base, but also a good source of foodstuffs. The



Manuel Avila Camacho

thousands of tons of coffee, fresh meats, and vegetables which the island can furnish American forces will make it possible for ships from the United States to fill their cargo space with military equipment, instead of food. The soil and climate are also admirably suited to growing wheat, sugar, and rice, and efforts will probably be made to encourage their production.

Mexico's Chief

Manuel Avila Camacho, president of Mexico, demonstrated his well known leadership last week as his nation went on a complete war footing. The Axis challenge to Mexican shipping was thus quickly answered by the Mexican government.

The United Nations, moreover, counted themselves fortunate that Camacho is of a different stripe than the administration which headed Mexico in the last war. Then the Mexican government was practically pro-German, but today Camacho is continuing to stand against the Axis nations as he has done for many months past.

The 45-year-old Mexican leader, who has held his office since December 1940, grew up the son of a peasant family. He early deserted the book-keeping career that had been planned for him, and from the age of 18 spent his next 15 years taking part in one military-political upheaval after another. An ability to foresee the winning side kept him always on the upgrade.

Camacho's climb was within the army itself until he became a member of President Cardenas' cabinet. His next jump took him to the presidency itself. Mild in manner and somewhat pudgily built, he is inclined to be studious, but has an impressive record on the polo field and in the army to prove that he is equally a man of action. By and large, the Mexican people seem well satisfied with Camacho's record in fulfilling his pledges to continue the reforms begun by the Cardenas administration. He has done a great deal to improve relations with the United States, and his policy is now proving beneficial to both countries.

Pronunciations

Baku—bah-koo'
Batum—bah-toom'
Caucasus—ko'kah-sus
Manuel Avila Camacho—mah-noo-el' ah'-
vee-lah kah-mah'choe
Lazaro Cardenas—lah'sah-roe kahr'day-
nahs
Chungking—choong'king'
Kharkov—kahr'koff
Kerch—kairch'
Semyon Timoshenko—sem'yon tee-moe-
shen'koe—o as in go



INTERNATIONAL NEWS
SALVAGE OPERATIONS IN THE DESERT. This pile of shell cases is part of the huge collection of material salvaged from the battlefields of the Libyan desert by the British.

U. S. Confronted by Shipping Bottleneck

(Continued from page 1)

miral Land, and high Navy officials, speaking at ceremonies in different cities, paid tribute to the magnificent performance of the shipyards, and painted glowing pictures of a rapidly expanding Victory Fleet.

Moreover, it is common knowledge that shipbuilding records are being broken every day. During World War I, the record for the fastest construction of a single ship at the famous Hog Island was 234 days. The average ship took almost a year to build. Today the Maritime Commission expects the Liberty ships to be built within 105 days. The outstanding Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation of Portland, Oregon, operated by Henry J. Kaiser (who built the Boulder Dam), has produced a Liberty ship within 78 days—27 days ahead of schedule. Kaiser eventually hopes to produce these ships within 40 days from keel-laying to delivery!

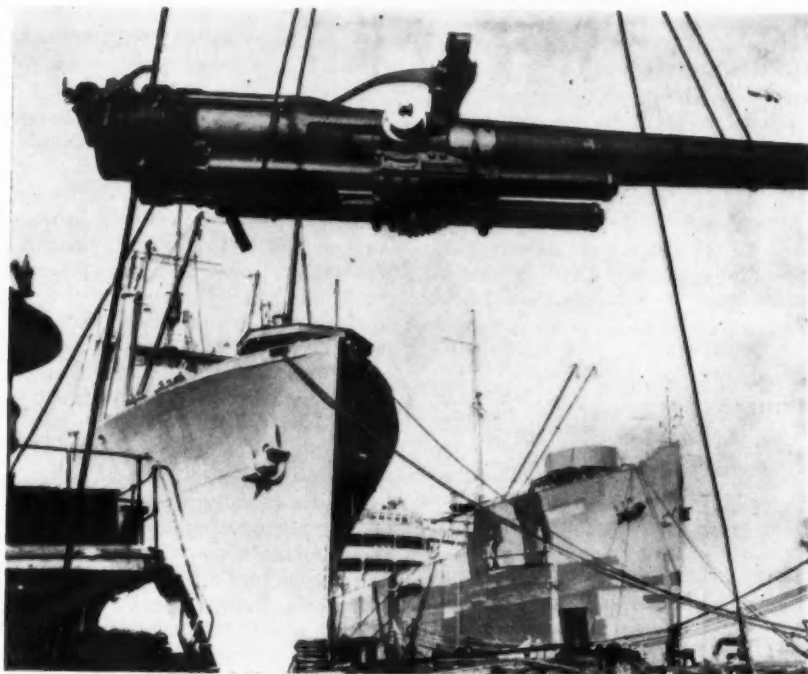
Why, then, is there a shipping bottleneck? It is partly because we are fighting a seven-ocean war, in which enormous supply lines of 12,000 miles and more are by no means uncommon. Nearly all our transportation must be by sea, while most of Germany's and much of Japan's is by land.

Reasons for Bottleneck

But the answer lies chiefly in the cold waters of the Atlantic, in the Gulf of Mexico, in the St. Lawrence River, and in the mouth of the Mississippi—it is the Nazi submarine. Cold figures tell the story. American shipyards delivered 120 vessels in the 130 days from January 1 to May 10. This represents the great bulk of Allied shipbuilding during that time. During the somewhat longer period from December 7 to May 25, 211 United Nations merchant ships were sunk by submarines in the Atlantic area. Sixteen were sunk in one recent week. The answer is all too clear: *our ships are being sunk at a rate faster than new ships are being built!* It makes no difference that we are producing ships more rapidly than ever before in the history of the world. A tonnage shortage still exists. The total shipping pool of the United Nations is yet sadly inadequate for effective war against the Axis, and the total dimensions of the pool are gradually shrinking instead of growing larger.

There is hardly a phase of military or civilian activity which is not affected by the inadequacy of our merchant marine. On the civilian front, it is felt in a shortage of sugar. In more than a third of the states, gasoline rationing has become a necessity, for which the lack of oil tankers is solely responsible. In New York and Boston the price of bananas is considerably higher than usual, because the banana freighters now dock at ports on the Gulf of Mexico to avoid the perils of the coastal route, and because there are not as many fruit ships operating as there once were.

These things are relatively insignificant. They are nuisances and inconveniences which can be tolerated in the interest of the war effort. But the military implications are quite serious. It is a startling fact that the machines of war are piling up



ARMING MERCHANTMEN. "Somewhere in the United States," a heavy gun is being hoisted aboard a merchantman by a powerful crane.

on docks and wharves on both coasts, along railroad sidings, and at some inland plants, for lack of ships to carry them to the battle fronts. For example, 40,000 military trucks were recently reported to be standing at a single East coast port waiting for ships.

The unique character of this war is such that it could be lost simply because of a lack of shipping. The United States is not only the chief center of ship replacement now for all the United Nations, but it is also the arsenal for these nations. We have frequently boasted that we cannot lose this war because our productive capacity is so much greater than is that of the Axis. But we sometimes forget that that productive capacity is meaningless unless we also possess the means of getting the tanks and planes and guns where they are needed.

For example, China stands with her back to the wall today because

erse the long and dangerous Murmansk route. And the same principle applies to the Battle of Australia, and the Battle of Libya, and all the other far-flung fronts where Allied and Axis forces are opposed.

Finally, we must remember that the eventual invasion of the European continent depends upon successfully transporting hundreds of thousands of troops and millions of tons of equipment. As a prominent British statesman recently said, "The possibility of opening a western front against Germany is in our minds, but every move on the board is conditioned by transport problems. The matter of sea transport is a constant anxiety. With the best will in the world we cannot always get the forces we want to the place we desire at the time we wish."

In summary, then, we see that (1) the available pool of shipping for the Allied Nations is at present inadequate; (2) the tonnage to be

To begin with, it must be admitted that the United States started with a heavy handicap in this all-important war of shipping. Between 1922 and 1937 American shipbuilding was almost at a standstill. Only two ocean-going cargo ships were built during this period. In 1938 Emory Land became chairman of the Maritime Commission, and a modest program of shipbuilding was undertaken. But it was not until January of 1941 that a really large-scale program of shipbuilding was begun. If we ignore the desperate demands posed by the war, and weigh our achievements solely in light of the past, our progress has been truly remarkable.

Launchings Increase

Today there are 62 shipyards scattered along all three coasts and on the Great Lakes. There are 300 launching ways, five times as many as we had two years ago. The President has set as a goal 8,000,000 deadweight tons of shipping for this year and 15,000,000 for next, a total of 23,000,000 deadweight tons, or 2,300 sea-going tankers and freighters. Rear Admiral Vickery has promised that this goal will be reached and that 5,000,000 more tons will be delivered in 1943 if the steel plate is available.

[A word of explanation is in order here about the term "deadweight tons," which is used above in stating the President's goal for the next two years. This term refers to the weight ships can carry, in cargo, stores, water, and fuel. It is a term widely used in the United States. It has nothing to do with the weight of the ship proper, for which we use the term "displacement tons."]

The United States has just recently reached the rate of production of two ships a day, and there is reason to believe that by fall this figure will be increased to three a day. However, it must reach *four a day* if the President's goal is to be reached.

It is important to realize that the excellent records established by such yards as the Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation are by no means representative of the whole shipbuilding industry. The record for the East coast and Gulf yards is spotty. Many of these yards are taking upwards of 150 days to finish the Liberty ships which should be done in 105 days or less. Some of the yards are behind schedule. Here, of course, is room for improvement.

The biggest problems seem to be in getting enough steel and efficient labor. It is no secret that the yards are having trouble securing steel plate for their current requirements, and the steel companies are behind in their deliveries already by 165,000 tons—enough for 64 Liberties. There are also shortages of machinery, pumps, electrical equipment, and other items.

As for labor, the problem is big enough to give Admiral Land a permanent headache. There is plenty of manpower, but not of men used to building ships. Shipbuilding has traditionally been a craftsman's trade, which men entered by the hard route of years of apprenticeship. Now thousands of men must be trained

(Concluded on page 7, column 4)



BIG THREE OF SHIPPING. War Shipping Administrator Emory S. Land (right) chats with Lewis M. Douglas and Rear Admiral Howard L. Vickery, new deputy administrators.

she lacks machines of war, and because we are unable to send them to her in needed quantities. Likewise the Battle of Russia hinges largely on Russia's ability to secure and mass larger quantities of fighting instruments than those arrayed by Hitler. Russia is depending upon American supplies which must trav-

moved is great and the distances are very far indeed; (3) the rate of sinkings and destruction of vessels is at present high, and (4) the rate of replacement at present is far too low. Having analyzed the problem, let us now see what is being done and what more can be done to solve the situation.

Hitler Moves Toward Caucasus

(Concluded from page 1)

upon it to supply their troops on the southern and central fronts. If the Russians can wrest Kharkov from its conquerors of last year, they will be in a position greatly to weaken the Nazi drive not only in the south but in the central area as well. They might, in fact, entirely check the German drive toward the Caucasus.

No part of Russia is of greater military or economic importance at the present time than the Caucasus. Its importance is out of all proportion to its size, for it has greater economic value than any other section of the Soviet Union and it is a military prize of inestimable worth. But before we consider the military and economic advantages, let us look at the region itself.

Wealth of Caucasus

The Caucasus derives its name from the Caucasus Mountains, which cut across the region. The mountains themselves are a chain extending some 900 miles in length and from 40 to 140 miles in depth. They are among the most forbidding mountains of Europe, with peaks as high as 18,000 feet. Within the range are many valleys, sheltered and rich.

The Caucasus, or Caucasia, as the region is sometimes called, extends from the Black Sea on the west to the Caspian Sea on the east. On the south, it is bordered by Turkey and Iran (formerly Persia). Its northern boundary is less clearly delineated, but is generally regarded as extending nearly to the foothills of the Urals. The Caucasus is about the size of the state of Montana.

While the mountain range is the most distinctive geographic feature of the Caucasus, the region is noteworthy in many other respects. North and south of the mountains are rich agricultural lands. The cli-



The vital Caucasus area

menia and Georgia. It was in the latter that Stalin was born. Thus the Caucasus is a term used to describe a geographical area rather than a political unit.

The principal industry of the Caucasus is oil, and it is oil that is making the region so vitally important in the present campaigns on the Eastern Front. The Caucasus itself produces at least 80 per cent of the total output of oil in the Soviet Union. While the production is already very large, the oil reserves in that region are estimated by geologists to be among the largest in the world.

Importance of Oil

The importance of oil to Germany cannot be overemphasized. No one knows how low the Reich's supply of oil reserves is running. But it was reported that the German tanks and trucks participating in the Russian campaigns last month were using olive oil as lubricants, so acute had the shortage of oil become. The Caucasus alone produces more than enough oil to meet Germany's needs.

The largest oil-producing area of the Caucasus is located on the western shore of the Caspian Sea, north and south of the city of Baku, where the largest refineries are located. The oil is shipped from Baku to Batumi, on the Black Sea, by a double pipe line. The development of the oil industry has resulted in a considerable growth in the cities located in the vicinity of the fields. In some cases, the population has nearly doubled, and new housing projects have been undertaken, recreational facilities provided, and schools, theaters, hospitals, and other community buildings constructed.

Oil is by no means the only asset of the Caucasus. Next in importance is manganese ore, essential in the production of steel. The manganese deposits of the Caucasus produce a high-grade ore. Before the war, the United States imported large quantities of manganese ore from this region.

The third vital war material which

comes from the Caucasus is copper. The copper industry has greatly increased in size during recent years. One town, built upon the industry, has increased its population fivefold during the last dozen years.

Agriculture in North and South

The part of the Caucasus lying north of the mountains is chiefly agricultural in nature. More than 3,000,000 of the 4,000,000 inhabitants live in rural areas. Those who are engaged in industry are employed in the oil fields and refineries.

Although agriculture remains the principal occupation of the people of the southern Caucasus, that region is becoming more and more industrialized. Some of the new industries established there during recent years include the manufacture of synthetic rubber, cement, textiles, shoes, boots, and many other products.

The agriculture of the northern part of the Caucasus differs markedly from that of the southern section. Grain is the principal crop of the northern region. The flat rolling country is ideally suited to the use of farm machinery, which the Soviet government has greatly encouraged. Some of the largest collective farms, or "grain factories" are located in the North Caucasus.

In addition to grain, livestock is produced in considerable quantities in the North Caucasus. The government has encouraged the production of livestock, and consequently sheep and cattle raising are now important industries in the region.

In the southern part of the Caucasus, cotton is the most important crop, and more and more land is being planted to that crop. Irrigation is extensively used in the cultivation of the cotton crop. Alfalfa and tobacco are other important products of the southern Caucasian area.

It can be seen that if Hitler could gain control of the Caucasus, he would acquire a large region capable of yielding many of the products which he vitally needs for his war machine and to feed his people. But it is not only from the economic point

of view that the Nazis are eyeing the Caucasus. The region now stands as a barrier between Hitler and the Middle East. If his drive through the Caucasus succeeds, Hitler will be on the border of Turkey and Iran, at the gateway to the Middle East. There he would be in a position to strike against the United Nations in Iran, Iraq, and Egypt.

The Russians are determined that the Germans shall not conquer the Caucasus. They have been preparing for the present offensive for months. The British and Americans have been fortifying their positions in the Middle East in order to prevent Germany from breaking through into that region. It is quite possible that the United States and Great Britain will join forces with the Russians in the Caucasus, if the Nazis succeed in entering that region. One of the great battles of the war may well be fought on the plains and in the mountains of the Caucasus.

SHIPPING BOTTLENECK

(Concluded from page 6)

almost overnight to do the craftsman's job. Mass production and prefabrication are solving the problem in most of the new yards which are setting records for speed.

The recent reorganization of the WSB gives a clue to the other chief problem which remains to be solved—the problem of using the ships we do have as efficiently as possible. All too often in the past ships have gone out from the United States loaded to capacity and have come back with skimpy cargoes or none at all. Other ships have carried non-essential cargoes, or have had their cargoes inefficiently loaded so that much space was wasted. Deputy Administrator Douglas will now concentrate on the job of planning schedules and routing ships, so that waste will be cut out as much as possible. It has been estimated that ideal handling of the merchant marine would increase its efficiency by 25 per cent. Eventually an Allied control board may be set up.



SOVPHOTO
Marshal Semyon Timoshenko

mate on the southern slope is subtropical and many tropical fruits and other products come from that area.

The Caucasus is one of the great melting pots of the world. The inhabitants—some 12,000,000 in number—include a great mixture of races, languages, and nationalities. Various languages are used in the schools, theaters, and other public places. The entire area is divided into a number of republics, perhaps the most famous of which are Ar-

List of Government Agencies in the News

THE following is a partial list of prominent government agencies. In each case are given the initials of the agency, the full title, a brief explanation of its duties, and the name of the person directly in charge.

BEW—Board of Economic Warfare; makes foreign trade arrangements which will help win the war on the economic front. Milo Perkins.

CAA—Civil Aeronautics Administration; promotes the development of air commerce, regulates civilian and commercial flying, builds landing fields, navigation beacons, etc. Charles Stanton.

COI—Coordinator of Information; collects from government agencies all their essential information and turns it over to the President. William Donovan.

FBI—Federal Bureau of Investigation; tracks down federal criminals; now busy with spies and saboteurs. J. Edgar Hoover.

FCC—Federal Communications Commission; regulates radio, telephone, and telegraph companies. James Fly.

FDA—Food and Drug Administration; protects the public against harmful foods, drugs, cosmetics, poisons, and other products. Walter Campbell.

FDIC—Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation; insures depositors, up to a specified amount, against loss of funds through bank failures. Leo Crowley.

FPC—Federal Power Commission; has authority over water power projects on navigable streams and over the movement of electrical power from state to state. Leland Olds.

FSA—Federal Security Agency; supervises the activities of the U. S. Office of Education, U. S. Employment Service, Public Health Service, Social Security Board, and other agencies to promote the health, welfare, and security of the American people. Paul McNutt.

FTC—Federal Trade Commission; prevents business activities which harm the public interest. William Ayres.

FWA—Federal Works Agency; in charge of construction and upkeep of federal buildings, supervises the funds which the federal government gives to states for road building, and plans public works programs. Philip Fleming.

GPO—Government Printing Office; prints, binds, and sells U. S. govern-



SHARP-EYED CENSOR. In New York, 2,000 censors scan incoming and outgoing foreign mail in order to detect secret messages. Above, a code and cipher examiner is translating a secret message into English.

ment reports. Augustus Giegengack.

ICC—Interstate Commerce Commission; regulates railroads, trucks, pipe lines, and other carriers of commerce between the states; decides the rates they shall charge. Joseph Eastman.

NHA—National Housing Agency; deals with federal slum clearance projects, with loans to home owners for improving their dwellings, and with other housing problems. John Blandford, Jr.

NLRB—National Labor Relations Board; protects the rights of employees to organize without interference and to bargain collectively with their employers. Run by three-man board.

NWLB—National War Labor Board; adjusts "labor disputes which might interrupt work which contributes to the effective prosecution of the war." William Davis.

OCD—Office of Civilian Defense; plans and carries out programs designed to protect the life and property of the citizens in time of emergency, such as during air raids. James Landis.

OEM—Office for Emergency Management; keeps the President advised of the progress being made by war agencies. Wayne Coy.

OFF—Office of Facts and Figures; assembles and makes available to the public factual information on the progress of the war effort. Archibald MacLeish.

OGR—Office of Government Reports; acts as a central clearinghouse through which individual citizens

may make inquiries and complaints and receive advice and information. Lowell Mellett.

OOC—Office of Censorship; at the discretion of the Director, censors communications by mail, cable, and radio between the United States and foreign countries in accordance with rules prescribed by the President. Byron Price.

OPA—Office of Price Administration; regulates prices and acts to prevent profiteering, hoarding, speculation, and other practices which are harmful to the national war effort. Leon Henderson.

PRA—Public Roads Administration; cooperates with state departments in the construction of highways. Thomas MacDonald.

REA—Rural Electrification Administration; lends communities the money needed for building rural electric distribution systems and generating plants. Harry Slattery.

RFC—Reconstruction Finance Corporation; provides funds in emergencies to banks and other financial institutions; aids in financing agriculture, commerce, and industry. Charles Henderson.

SCS—Soil Conservation Service; encourages measures which prevent erosion; assists farmers in developing and using farm lands profitably; prepares aerial maps for defense purposes. Hugh Bennett.

SEC—Securities and Exchange Commission; supervises the buying and selling of stocks on stock exchanges and other markets; suppresses fraudulent practices in connection with the sale of securities. Ganson Purcell.

SSB—Social Security Board; administers the federal system of old-age insurance, unemployment compensation, aid to dependent children, and aid to the blind. Arthur Altmeyer.

SSS—Selective Service System; classifies and drafts the manpower of the nation for service in the armed forces. Lewis Hershey.

TVA—Tennessee Valley Authority; improves the Tennessee River system for navigation; constructs and operates dams and electric power projects throughout the valley. David Lilienthal.

USES—United States Employment Service; supervises the public employment offices throughout the country; publishes information about

employment opportunities; aids in supplying workers for war industries. John Corson.

USIS—United States Information Service; acts as a clearinghouse for information on all phases of governmental activity; furnishes to the public, upon request, information on the structure and operation of federal agencies. Harriet Root.

WMC—War Manpower Commission; plans for the efficient use of the nation's men, women, and children in the war effort. Paul McNutt.

WPB—War Production Board; exercises general direction over the production of all materials needed in the war program; for converting industries to war uses. Donald M. Nelson.

WSA—War Shipping Administration; has the power "to control the operation, purchase, charter, or requisition of any vessel under American control for the duration of the war," with the exception of fighting ships and vessels engaged in coastwise and inland shipping. Emory Land.

♦ SMILES ♦

Customer: "You ought to be in the war instead of in this store."

Proprietor: "What makes you say that?"

Customer: "No enemy could stand up to the way you charge."

—SELECTED

Customer: "Is this hair tonic any good?"

Druggist: "Well, I spilled some on my comb last week and now it's a brush."

—CAPPER'S WEEKLY



"What worries me is that I never can tell when I've got a flat."

HUFFINE IN COLLIER'S

"I take off my hat to people who can eat oysters. I tried them for dinner last night and one was my limit."

"What was the matter? What did they look like when you opened the shells?"

"Oh, do you have to open them?"

—ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY

A sentry in a motor cavalry section heard hoofbeats, and gave the usual "Halt! Who's there?"

Just then a horse whinnied and the sentry, a stickler for precision, yelled out, "Advance and be mechanized!"

—NEAL O'HARA

Nothing further is heard of the dazed western announcer who cracked, "We interrupt the news bulletins at this point for our regular broadcast."

—PORTLAND OREGONIAN

"Their engagement is still a secret."

"Yes, so everybody's saying."

—OUTSPAN

A moth leads a tough life. He spends the summer in a fur coat and the winter in a bathing suit.

—LOG

Customer: "But I can't pay you for this suit for three months."

Tailor: "Oh, that's all right. Don't worry about that."

Customer: "Well, thanks. When will it be ready?"

Tailor: "In about three months."



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